Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN SA 02205 052259Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05
AID-05 /067 W
----------030353 061010Z /11
R 052210Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7961
INFO USICA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 2205

USICA FOR AR AND PGM/P

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, ES
SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON EL SALVADOR

1. NEW YORK TIMES ON MAY 3 PRINTED ALAN RIDING ARTICLE ON

EL SALVADOR. GIST OF ARTICLE WAS THAT GOES AND POLITICAL RIGHT, FEARFUL OF ANOTHER PEASANT UPRISING SUCH AS OCCURRED IN 1932, WERE MOVING FORCEFULLY TO WEAKEN OR DESTROY THE "GRASS ROOTS COALITION THAT BRINGS TOGETHER MILITARY PEASANTS, WORKERS AND STUDENTS."

2. EMBASSY APPRECIATES USINFO THOUGHTFULNESS IN SO PROMPTLY BRINGING FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE TO OUR ATTENTION.

3. GOVERNMENT OF EL SALVADOR OFFICIALS HAVE REACTED TO ARTICLE WITH CONSIDERABLE DISMAY. THEY PROFESS TO CONSIDER IT INCORRECT, UNFAIR, AND BASED UPON VERSION OF EVENTS PUT OUT BY THEIR ADMITTED ENEMIES, I.E., POLITICAL OPPOSITION AND CERTAIN ACTIVIST ELEMENTS OF CATHOLIC CHURCH.

4. IN TALKING WITH GOES OFFICIALS, WE HAVE DESCRIBED TO
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PAGE 02 SAN SA 02205 052259Z

THEM PROMINENCE, CIRCULATION AND INFLUENCE UPON US PUBLIC OPINION OF NEW YORK TIMES. WE HAVE USED THIS TO REINFORCE OUR ADVICE THAT GOES SHOULD EXERT MAXIMUM CARE TO INSURE THAT ITS DEEDS AS WELL AS ITS WORDS CAN BEAR AMPLE PUBLIC SCRUTINY FROM STANDPOINT OF HUMAN-RIGHTS CRITERIA.

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5. FOR WHAT IT MAY BE WORTH, DEPARTMENT SHOULD KNOW THAT THERE ARE SOME INTERESTING MIXED REACTIONS HERE TO NYTIMES ARTICLE. FOR EXAMPLE:

A. HIGH FIGURE IN MNR LEFTIST OPPOSITION PARTY TOLD US PRIVATELY THAT RIDING PRESENTATION WAS "PURE BPR PROPAGANDA" (BPR IS BLOQUE POPULAR REVOLUCIONARIO GROUP WHICH HAS BEEN OCCUPYING FOREIGN EMBASSIES AND EMPLOYING OTHER TACTICS OF HARASSMENT AGAINST GOES);

B. A THIRD-COUNTRY AMBASSADOR, UPON READING THE RIDING STORY TELEPHONED ME TO COMMENT THEREON; HE OBSERVED THAT WHEREAS RIDING THROUGHOUT HIS STORY ASSERTS OR IMPLIES THAT THE GOES IS AGGRESSIVELY ON THE OFFENSIVE, EXACTLY THE REVERSE IS TRUE. FOR THE LAST SIX MONTHS, HE SAID, THE GOES HAS BEEN ESSENTIALLY ON THE DEFENSIVE AND ONLY REACTING TO ACTIONS OF ITS OPPONENTS; THE OPPOSITION, SENSING THIS, IS PUSHING, PROBING AND PROVOKING WHEREVER IT CAN. THE TRAGEDY OF ALL THIS, SAID THE AMBASSADOR, IS THAT ONE DAY THEY MAY IN FACT PUSH THE GOES OVER THE BRINK AND PROVOKE THE VERY BLOODBATH WHICH WE ALL DREAD.

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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Draft Date: 05 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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Expiration:
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From: SAN SALVADOR
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ISecure: 1
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Review Date: 12 jul 2005
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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